

OUR YOUNG FOLKS

The Tiger's Escape: A Toyville Tragedy Played With Mechanical Toys

Boys and girls who are fond of producing plays for the entertainment of themselves and their friends will find an entirely new amusement in this sort of play produced with mechanical toys.

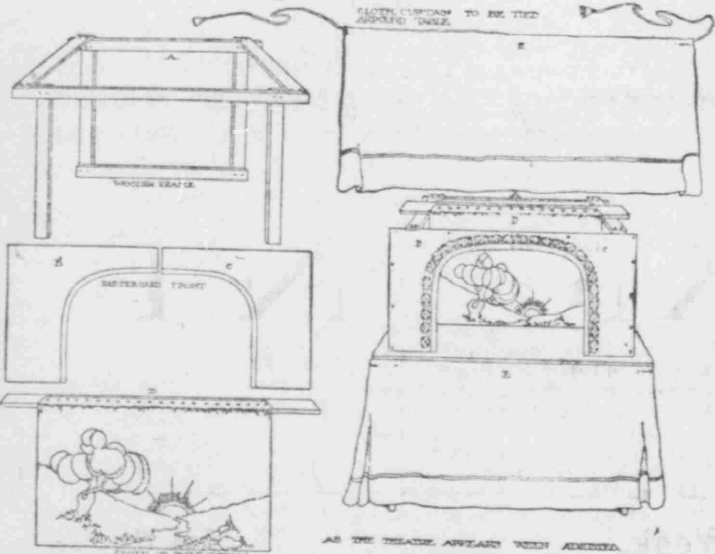
This is a diversion which has never before been given on any stage, but which we will show our young readers how to enjoy. The mechanical toys which will take all the parts of the plays given by us will all be of the cheapest kind—those costing 50 cents or less. Almost every person has one or more of these toys as a gift from Santa Claus. If the children of one family do not possess all the toys required for the play it will be easy enough to have their

young friends join in giving the play, bringing their own toys with them. In this way a variety of characters for the play can be secured.

The children giving the play will speak the parts from the wings. The toys can be controlled by strings attached to them, and made to pause in the middle of the stage when the action of the play requires it. Today we will explain how to build a theater where the plays may be given, and will give our readers the first play, which has been especially prepared for the mechanical toys. Later the Young Folks' Section will contain other plays which may be given in this manner.

How to Build the Theater.

By HENRY CALDWELL.



"The Tragedies of Toyville," can, of course, be produced on any kind of a small, improvised stage, but it is best to construct a little stage especially. First make your front arch. Take two large pieces of heavy colored paper or cardboard and cut half an arch from each. When they are placed together on the front of a frame you will have a complete proscenium arch.

The frame can be made of light strips

across the front arch or across wings or sides. The toys must have an uninterrupted entrance and exit from both sides. Curtains can be made according to the fancy of the person building the theater. They can be made of fancy wall paper or of plain paper, painted. When the frame is built, as shown here, the paper arch must be tacked on around the edges. If the paper arch is decorated as in a real theater the little



CHRISTOPHER CAT—OH, MY POOR COUSIN, I WEEP FOR YOU.

of wood. The stage should be fully 50 or 60 inches wide and 30 to 40 inches deep. Because some of the toys which are to be used for the actors are not only large, but move quite rapidly, and unless the stage is large the effect will be lost. Join your frame together, as shown in the illustration. Do not have any floor to the frame. A table or flat-top desk must be used for the floor of the stage. Do not have any cross-pieces running along the bottom of the frame, either

theater will be much improved in appearance. It will probably be best not to attempt to have the scene curtains roll up and down. If they are painted and tacked on a little pole, which will rest across the framework, the same purpose will be accomplished. Leave the scene curtains loose, so they can be moved back and forth or removed entirely, according to the nature of the scene presented.

After the theater frame and arch are

joined together, place them on the table or desk. If a table is used, a curtain should be tied around the front, hanging down to the floor, so the audience cannot see the children or people who are directing the play from the rear. Place two high screens or curtains on each side of the table on which you rest the stage frame, and across the top have a curtain. Thus you will close up the bottom, sides and top, so that the audience will see only what is presented on the stage, and will see nothing of what is going on behind the scenes.

In operating the toys the persons or children directing the performance should employ a little mechanical ingenuity and judgment in order to get a good effect. When it is desired to stop a toy in the center of the stage a thread should be attached to the rear of the toy, and when it runs across the stage to the proper position the thread should be held from the wings. If some threads are arranged before the curtain goes up, with tiny pin hooks in one end, so they can be hooked to the toys that are to be stopped on the stage, much time will be saved in tying threads to the toys. When it is desired to have a toy pass very slowly across the stage it should not be wound very tightly. By trying or rehearsing the play before it is given in public all these little details can be mastered. In fact, a play should be well rehearsed before being given in public.



"ONE, TWO, COUNTED KING LION."

When it is desired to have an animal make a noise while on the stage another animal of the same kind should be kept in the wings, behind the scenes, and this animal should make the noise for the animal which is acting. There are a number of noisy toys which can all be used to make the play lively and realistic. White confetti, which can be purchased almost anywhere now for 5 cents a bag, can be used to illustrate a snowstorm. There is a little box with a string attached to it, which can be used to imitate a rooster crowing. The hand is jerked down the waxed string, and the noise produced is like the noise made by a rooster. If so desired, the animals which are to be the actors can be dressed up in little costumes. This will help to make the play more comical.

Bear (looking toward the wings)—There he comes!

(Animals shake and tremble.)

(Enter Elephant, bearing Tiger bound to his back, and stops in the center of the stage. Tiger roars.)

Elephant—Out of the way, animals. Tiger is my prisoner. Come along, Monkey, do your duty.

(Enter Cat from left and goes to center, taking position near Elephant.)

Cat—Oh, my poor cousin! I have just heard! I weep for you! Is there no hope?

Monkey—Does anybody wish to buy a tiger skin crazy rug?

All the animals (shaking)—Ha, ha, ha!

Tiger—I fear there is no hope, Cousin Cat. "Death must your portion be," said the Lion to me, unless you can get an animal without claws to draw the sleigh or a sleigh which needs no animal to draw it!

Cat—Ah, then there is a chance. Surely there is no animal who will refuse to save a life so worthy by drawing a sleigh. (Goes to front of stage.) Beasts of the Forest, I call you to witness that I, Christopher Cat, shall not drink cream or eat food until I have saved the life of my noble kinsman, the Tiger of Bengal!

(Curtain.)

ACT II.

Forest of Bobo. Snow falling. Discovered: Christopher Cat at left of the stage. Comes forward as curtain rises.

Cat—I am weary! My bones ache! I have tasted no food for days, yet I shall keep my vow though I die of hunger. Here have I waited by the brook where animals drink. I have pleaded all in vain. Ah, here is one who must have a heart!

(Enter Rhinoceros at left and goes slowly across the stage to right.)

Cat—Graceful gazelle! Will you deign to lend your dainty feet to drawing the sleigh of Santa Claus?

Rhinoceros—I am not dainty, and I am not so thick-skinned but that I can feel the point of the stick. Annie and Willie can get along without me. (Exit Rhinoceros.)

(Enter Sheep at right.)

Cat—Pierce Wild Animal, will you forget your grudge against the innocent Tiger and keep him from being killed? Draw the sleigh of Santa Claus!

Sheep—No, thank you, tigers are trifles to me. I eat them as a child does a new brand of breakfast food. (Exit Sheep.)

(Enter Frog at left, goes to right.)

Cat—Beautiful bird, can you not save

The Tiger's Escape.

By JOHN WALKER HARRINGTON.

Dramatis Personae.

Santa Claus.....King of Toyland
Lion.....King of the Forest of Bobo
Tiger.....The Prisoner of Bobo
Jockey.....A Powder Monkey
Bear.....Wiseacre of Bobo
Elephant.....A Policeman
Christopher Cat.....A Hero
Jean-Carr.....An Automobillist
Birds and beasts of the forest of Bobo.

ACT I.

The forest of Bobo. Time, winter. Discovered: In the center of the stage: The Bear and the Monkey.

Monkey (bumps into the bear)—Ugh!

Bear—What's the matter with you? What makes you tremble so?

Monkey—I must kill Tiger.

Bear—Kill Tiger! What has the Tiger done?

Monkey—He ate the reindeers of Santa Claus. Tomorrow night is Christmas Eve and the children's presents cannot be delivered. Lion told me to shoot Tiger with a cannon. I'm the only powder monkey here in the forest of Bobo and I don't see any escape for Tiger.

(Enter animals, jumping about.)

All—What is this? He is going to shoot the Tiger!

(Roaring of Tiger in wings.)

Bear—I have an engagement down the vista in five minutes, and it will take me at least half an hour to get there. Good-by, Monkey. I hope that I won't interfere with your arresting that yellow beast.

(All start to go.)

All—Oh, no; Monkey, don't let us interfere!

the life of Tiger by drawing the sleigh of Santa Claus?

Frog—B-r-r-r! It's very cold! The pool is to be frozen over soon and I must hurry or I shall be locked out of my house for the winter. (Exit Frog, hopping, at right.)

Cat—Miserable beasts! I have asked them all, and all refuse. What's this? The Wild Man of Borneo! (Looks toward wings.)

(Enter Chauffeur at left, pursued by Bear. Both go to the right.)

Chauffeur—Save me! Save me!

(Cat gets between Bear and Chauffeur.)

Cat—You both look excited.

Bear—Let me get him! He tried to kill my cubs!

Chauffeur—This brown devil saw me going through the forest in my automobile, the White Ghost, and caught the wheels. I had to flee for my life. He is ignorant of the customs of men.

Bear—Let me have him, Cat.

Cat—Not so fast, Bear. It is the law of the forest of Bobo that when a lunatic appeals for aid to an animal the animal must save his life. This man is crazy. He talks of white ghosts and brown devils, and says he ought to blow bubbles. His life is mine. Touch him if you dare!

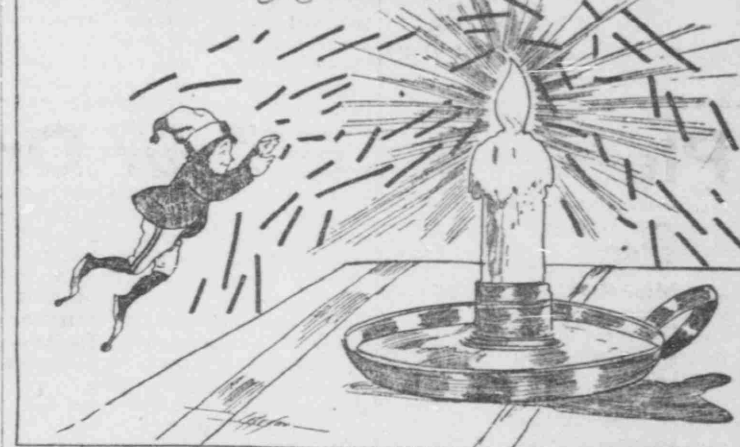
Bear—Have your own way. But remember to put your mark on him so that the others may know whose lunatic he is. (Exit Bear to right.)

Chauffeur—Advances to Cat. Cat scratches him. "Ouch! You hurt me."

Cat—That saves you from being killed by the next beast who meets you. Catnip saves life.

Chauffeur—You are kind. What can I do to repay you?

Jack and Nimble Puzzle.



Cut out the small figure of Jack and move him over the candle through the maze so that he may make the trip in two moves, touching NONE of the black lines.

reindeers of Santa Claus are sacred. I hope that this will be a warning to you.

Monkey—I'm ready any time you are, your majesty.

Lion—Speak when you are spoken to. Fire when I say three.

Monkey—Yes, your majesty.

Rabbit (shaking)—That will be a fine rug.

Rat—It will be a cheap imitation. No rug is valuable unless it is rat gnawed.

All the Animals—Ah! Ho! He's going to shoot!

Lion—One! Giraffe—It's all up with him.

Lion—Two!

(Comotion in the wings. Voice off stage—"In the name of the King of Toyland, I command you to stop!")

(Enter Cat.)

Cat—I told you, Tiger, I would save you.

Lion—What does this mean?

(Rumble of wheels. Enter Santa Claus.)

In an automobile at side of chauffeur. Bag of toys in automobile.)

Santa Claus—Release Tiger at once. Reindeer are out of date. I need them no longer. How do you like my reindeerless sleigh—a Christmas present from my little friend, Sir Christopher Cat?

Cat—Sir Christopher!

Santa Claus—Yes. This wagon is just the thing for me, and to reward you, Christopher Cat, I make you Knight Commander of the Footjack.

Lion—Tiger has done wrong. He must be punished.

Santa Claus—By all means. Let him wear his convict stripes for all the rest of his life.

Rabbit—Three cheers for Sir Christopher Cat!

Santa Claus—

Then as the Yule-draws near

Let's raise a triplex cheer

For this brave cat so gray

And his reindeerless sleigh.

(Curtain.)



"IN THE NAME OF THE KING OF TOYLAND, I COMMAND YOU TO STOP."

Geology for Boys and Girls.

For those who love rocks and desire to study the odd and beautiful minerals which nature strews around with such a lavish hand there is no necessity of taking long journeys or buying an extensive equipment. All that is needed is a quick eye, sturdy feet, strong hands and a few everyday tools which are to be found in nearly every home. Any boy or girl who desires to do rock-hunting needs first something to carry specimens in—a small basket or bag is just as good as a professional satchel. To break off pieces or to cut a stone in half, a hammer, a cold chisel and kitchen knife make a very complete and serviceable equipment.

The first place to visit is a stoneyard where householders obtain their supplies. Here are the blocks which come from the quarries in one place. In another are the stones after they have been dressed by the stonecutters, and everywhere are pieces and chips of the huge boulders, which have been broken or cut off in trimming the stone.

The commonest kinds found are the sandstones and limestones. To the careless observer they look alike, but a little thought and a few experiments will soon show anyone a big difference between them. The first difference between limestone and sandstone is in the grain. A sandstone is made up of little grains of sand, which, under heat and pressure, have compacted very much as a boy forces snow together to make a snowball. In a limestone the particles are much finer and have been brought together more by the action of water, in the form of mud or silt, than in the form of little crystals. When whitewash dries in a pall the solid sediment which remains in the pall is the beginning of limestone.

Another way of showing this difference is to rub two pieces of stone together. When you rub the sandstone the grains separate, and, no matter how long you rub, there is always a roughish feel like sandpaper to the two pieces. When you rub two pieces of limestone the rubbing produces dust and the surfaces become smoother and smoother, until they are almost like glass. Of the sandstones, the commonest is the old red, which is best known as brownstone. This is the material with which so many living houses are built. Next to this is the pale red sandstone, and then come yellow and gray sandstones. In some parts of the world there are greenish, bluish, and black sandstones, but these are very seldom found in the eastern part of the United States. The coloring comes not from the sand of the rock, but from other substances which are mixed in with it. The limestones have a much larger variety in color and appearance. They begin at one end with snow white marble and range to yellow, gray, brown, and black. Some are variegated and others mottled. Now and then you find across green marble, red marble and rose marble.

In selecting pieces of sandstone and limestone take the fragments from the stoneyard and break them into pieces a little larger than an egg. In striking with the hammer you will notice that the limestone gives a clearer ring than the sandstone and breaks in a different way, producing much sharper edges and smoother surfaces. Take a specimen of each different color, have one of the workmen tell you what quarry it comes from and write these upon a little label which you paste on one side of the specimen. In this way, in any first-class stoneyard, you can get from forty specimens upward of sandstones and limestones, which will give a very good idea of these two valuable materials.

A Roman Riddle.

This picture illustrates the name of a people which was a great and powerful enemy of Rome. Can you guess what people it was?

The answer to the last Roman riddle was "Mercury."

